

Cutouts in the walls of the dining room were made to look like windows and offer a peek at the outdoors.



A Florida architect artfully blends geometric shapes, old-world detail and an amazing landscape for her family's dream home

house wide open

The home's design captures the scenic setting. Opposite: Architect Jaya Kader Zebede savors the outdoors through tall, wood-framed glass doors.



In designing her own home, South Florida architect Jaya Kader Zebede put a spin on the usual approach to waterfront property.

Rather than line a bank of rooms along a rear wall, she left a generous stretch of prime interior space wide open. No walls, no furniture — just an airy space, known as the gallery, with a row of glass doors and second-story windows to showcase a gorgeous panorama. From almost anywhere in the home, your gaze is directed to the gently sloped backyard across a sparkling waterway to the lush greenery of a golf course. “I wanted everyone to be able to experience the landscape as they move through the house,” Zebede says. “For me, it was really important that the house fuse with the landscape.” Even when walking up the stairs, your eye moves to the outdoors. “What really strikes you when you walk into the house is the amazing daylight,” says Iggy Cuba, co-owner of Nuhouse Design Associates in Miami, which collaborated with Zebede on the interior furnishings.

A native of Costa Rica, mother of four and the founding principal of KZ Architecture, Zebede was drawn to her vision of the Old Florida vernacular style when designing a home for her family in the town of Bay Harbor Islands, just north of Miami Beach. Details associated with the genre include

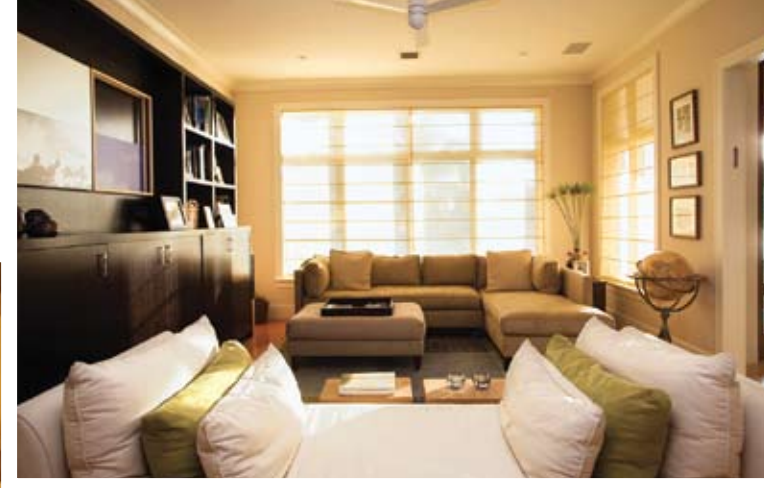
Square cutouts over the porch and the geometric pattern on balcony railings were borrowed from old wood-frame houses that the homeowner loves.

A generous backyard is perfect for this outdoorsy family. Inset: Earthy hues blanket the breakfast nook and family room beyond.





The maple-paneled ceiling is a modern interpretation of the beadboard ceilings prevalent in many Old Florida homes.



Clockwise from top: Furniture that wasn't "boxy," such as a backless daybed from Room & Board, was chosen for relaxing in the family room; the pool faces

a golf course; the second-floor hallway that wasn't "boxy," such as a backless daybed from Room & Board, was chosen for relaxing in the family room; the pool faces

deep overhangs and generous porches, which make sense for the climate and outdoorsy lifestyle. Zebede also referenced that same Old Florida style for decorative elements. "The row of square cutouts in the portico over the porch and the geometric pattern on the balcony railings are similar to features on some old wood-frame houses," she says.

Indoors, just off the front entry, is perhaps the most distinctive architectural feature: the dining room. Semi-enclosed, it's designed as a separate structure against the airiness of the gallery. Its exterior walls, which face the stairs, are clad in horizontal wood panels, intentionally resembling exterior siding. Cutouts in the walls of the room look like windows. "The idea," Zebede clarifies, "is to enhance the

feeling of being outdoors while walking from room to room." That same hint of "outdoors" is included high above in the maple-paneled ceiling of the gallery — once again a reference to Old Florida homes.

Off to either side of the grand gallery are the living and family rooms, which feel relatively modest in scale. Zebede purposely designed these spaces to be intimate, ideal for informal family activities and friendly get-togethers. As for the interior motif, "a palette of soft neutral hues allows both the art pieces and the outdoor scenery to shine," explains Cuba. Texture plays a design role through an abundance of Tufenkian Tibetan rugs and upholstered furniture pieces. "The intent was to create a modern-looking environment that also invites

you in," Cuba says. An unfussy and low round coffee table in the living room from Sipure Design in the Design Center of the Americas in Dania provides a sculptural focal point. Living-room chairs, custom-made by Nuhouse Furniture, a sister company to Nuhouse Design Associates, embodies "the simplicity of modern design with a composition that's not too boxy," Zebede says. The Barbara Barry sofa for Baker Furniture from Baker Knapp & Tubbs in Dania upholds her proclivity for furniture with a handmade feel (it's upholstered in heavily textured linen). Adds Cuba, "The loose, plush back pillows make it comfy, yet it still looks tailored and modern, which was important for this — and all rooms." kzarchitecture.com, nuhousedesign.com